

## THE PATHFINDER.

FREMONT'S DARING TRIP ACROSS THE  
ROCKIES AND SIERRAS TO THE SEA.He defied the Warnings of Indians and  
Trappers and the Terrors of Mountains  
Bared in Snow Until a Southwest Pass  
Was Found to the Pacific.(Copyright, 1895, by American Press Association.  
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His name as a pathfinder came to him by great achievement in many ways. They were great for the time of not great in results. Marvellous deeds are quickly outdone that they lose their proper place in the chronology of events. Their true measure is to be taken by a glance backward—not forward.

In his very young manhood Fremont was in training for the life of an explorer. He was an assistant to the government engineers who reconnoitered the Cherokee country of Tennessee and the Carolinas in anticipation of war, and became at home in wilderness among border men and savages. He saw the untutored Indian in bloody frays endure slashing and stabbing from keen knife blades with the stoicism of schoolboys in snowball battles. What was wasted valor for them would be glorious courage when displayed by white men for a noble purpose. His outdoor life and exercise lured him to exposure, while his application to technical problems fitted him to be a leader.

At 23 years of age he had ridden in a charge on a buffalo herd and fought mounted with enraged bulls in the crush of frantic trampling horned beasts. At that age, in his earliest expeditions, he would select three or four men of his company and travel alone among savages, taking the hardest route on the theory that possible disaster should be shared by the fewest number. When at Fort Laramie his first expedition, in 1842, friendly Indians warned him not to set out across the hostile lands between the Platte and the Rocky mountains. Their predictions, though well meant and apparently well founded, were ignored, and the expedition numbering but 36 men went ahead, meeting no hostile Indians, but nearly perishing from starvation. The grasshoppers had stripped the country of forage and the buffalo had fled to other pastures. When the party reached Wind River mountains both men and animals were exhausted by hardships and want of food. But Fremont was unwilling to rest satisfied with a hasty glance over the region which gives birth to the four great rivers of the west—the Colorado, Columbia, Missouri and Platte.

The men subsisted wholly upon dried buffalo meat cooked in tallow. Hostile Blackfeet roamed the hills and guarded the passes. A palisade and breastwork was built in a dense grove, and the men spent in need of rest were left there, while the leader and fourteen of the hardiest, including Carson, the doughty guide, toiled up the mountain slopes. The lofty peaks were deceptive, and the bold travelers found the way barred by lakes which compelled them to make wide detours; huge boulders hurled down the mountain slopes, and deep and impassable chasms yawned before them.

One by one the men and mules gave out and were left to rest and make their way back to camp. Five men only ascended the peak, clambering over frozen snow—although it was August—shod in moccasins so thin that the toes were left bare, while the leader and fourteen of the hardiest, including Carson, the doughty guide, toiled up the mountain slopes. The lofty peaks were deceptive, and the bold travelers found the way barred by lakes which compelled them to make wide detours; huge boulders hurled down the mountain slopes, and deep and impassable chasms yawned before them.

At one of the crossings of the Columbia the scouts reported the fort covered by a village of Indians encamped on the bank.

The explorers traveled for weeks in the unknown regions of the Columbia and went so far north as to catch sight of the snow covered peaks of Washington. Late in November they set out on the return, expecting to cross from the lower Columbia to the upper Colorado and then east to the Arkansas. Two months of hard journeying brought them to the Salmon Trout river, on the eastern slopes of the Sierras in the latitude of San Francisco. Deep snows and extreme cold had forced them into the temperate climate of the Great Basin.

An examination of the horses showed that they could not hold out to recross the rocky mountains eastward, and in spite of the most terrible warnings of the Indians Fremont decided to break through the Sierras to the valley of the Sacramento in the hope of finding Captain Stutter's famous Mexican settlement. The Indians spoke in unknown tongues, and communication with them was by signs. The tribes were at war with one another, and those engaged or hired as guides would not go above a day's journey from their villages.

The only food to be obtained from them was pine nuts, and as the voyageurs were living chiefly on pine the cravings of hunger added to their distress.

In the mountain passes the snow was four feet deep. Captain Stutter had crossed the Sierras to Stutter's fort 15 years previous, and he talked hopefully to the men in favor of Captain Fremont's project, helping to maintain courage and discipline in the band. Their hardships equalled those of the severest arctic journeys. The killing of a pet dog provided a feast for the whole camp. It served as a stimulant for days at a time. Hounds were broken to men on horseback in light maneuvering order, passing back and forth until a hard bed was made for the week or heavily burdened men and animals. Sometimes horses broke through and fell, half buried in snow. Then, with shovels and axes, the men labored until a stretch of hard track had been beaten.

In the middle of February the expedition passed the crest of the Sierras. The thermometer was below zero except when the sun shone. Then the snow melted in pools and streams and quickly froze as the sun's rays were cut off. The animals nearly perished. Their only sustenance was wild

grass. The night was usually passed in green gullies and ravines, where the starving beasts fed all night while the men rested. It became a question of area or death for all hands. Carson, the indefatigable scout, who traveled on ahead, announced his discovery of green feeding places with the joyous cry, "Life yet, life yet. I have found a fallow sprinkled with grass."

The draft animals which fell exhausted but lived for a few days. Fremont came to every sacrifice to save the lives of his men, exacting the pledge, however, that in the worst straits they would not resort to cannibalism. Several men were emaciated and wandered from the route.

On the 8th of March the expedition reached Stutter's, on the Sacramento. In crossing the Sierras the trail of the trail had perished and one man was missing. Stutter's mammoth farm was capable of entertaining the whole company and retelling the expedition for return. In March, 1844, Fremont resumed the homeward journey.

Tons & Tons & Tons of  
NEW GOODS

have been pouring into our Store and Warehouses the past few weeks Ex. barks "Paul Isenberg" and "J. C. Plüger" from Europe, and the different steamers and sailing vessels from San Francisco. Our stocks of heavy goods, such as Black and Galvanized Chain, Galvanized Sheet Iron, Sheet Zinc, Pig Lead Sheet Lead, Lead Pipe, Lamp Chalk, Shot, Bar Iron, Etc., has never been so large and complete as it is today. Fence Wire—Our stock on 4-5-6 black and 4-5-6-9-12 galvanized is very large, and we claim it is as fine a lot of wire as ever came to the country. However, we don't ask you to take our word for it if you don't wish to just come in and we will let you see a piece off of any coil and put it in our big vise upstairs and you can twist it, bend it, tie knots in it, and test it to your heart's content, and after you have done this and asked the price of it, you will be pretty sure to buy some.

Galvanized Buckets and Tub Sauce Pans, Tea Kettles, Blueing, Crown Soot Soap, Fine Clay and Day & Martin's Shoe Blacking we have plenty of now, and our stock of Galvanized Flexible Steel and Iron Wire Rope is complete from 1/4 to 4 inches. Hubbuck Boiled and Raw Lard and Castor Oil White Lead and Zinc, Red Lead and Oxide, Colza Oil and Stockholm Tar, all came by the "Isenberg" in fine order and are offered at low prices. Now is the time to have your Coffin trimmed; the hundred sets of "Coffin Furniture" just received are going off like "hot cakes."

The new "Pumping Plant" works well and you can get all the water you want, so you want one of our new Lawn Sprinklers. It is the best Sprinkler ever sold here, in parts to wear out, as it does not revolve, and is good for either light or heavy pressure of water.

Electrical Goods.—Our stock is more complete than ever, and we have five men hard at work wiring houses for Electric Lights. We can furnish you the fixtures, shades and lamps in any style, and if we wire your house you can feel sure it is done according to the latest Underwriters' rules.

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